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Timespirits
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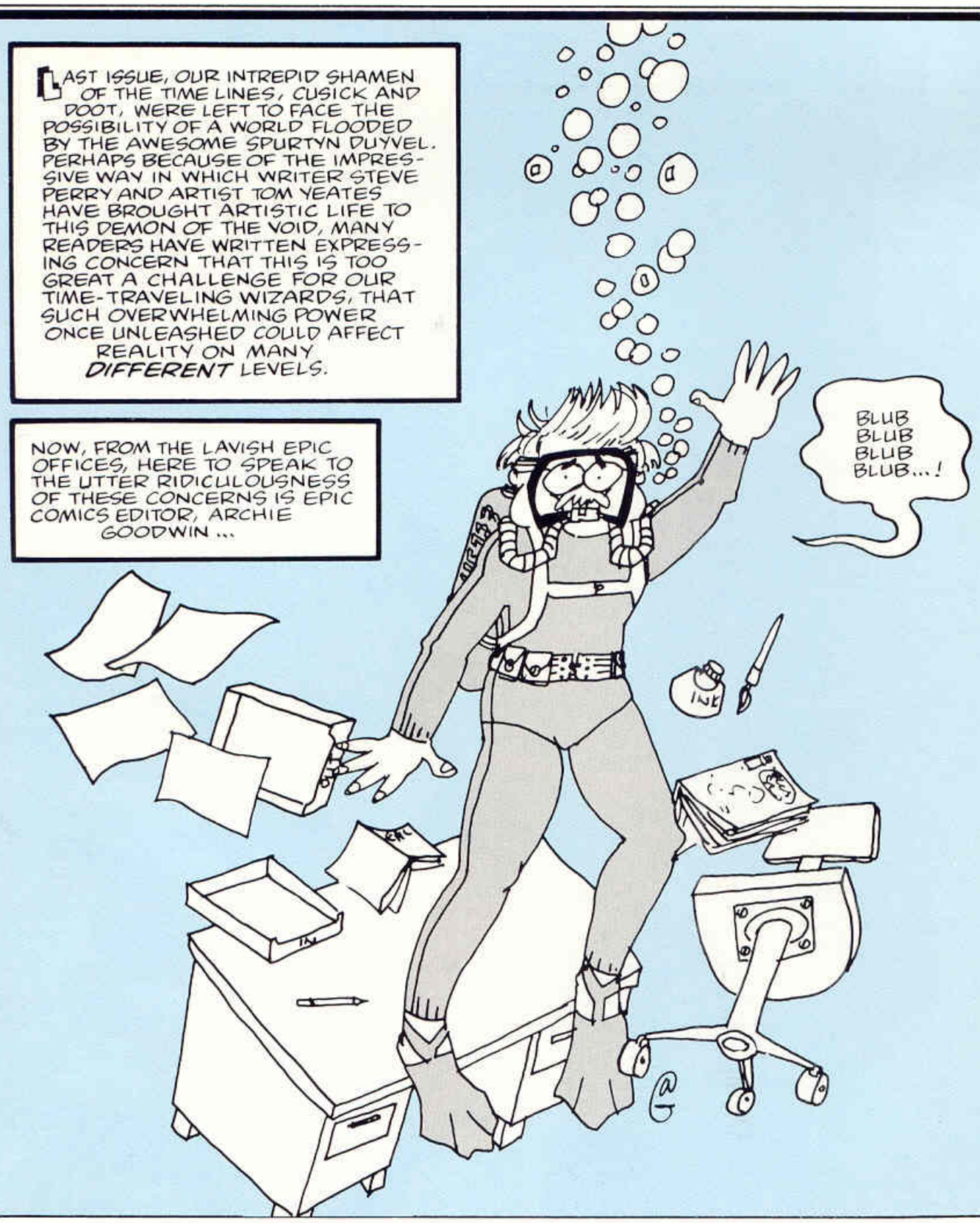
LAST ISSUE, OUR INTREPID SHAMEN OF THE TIME LINES, CUSICK AND DOOT, WERE LEFT TO FACE THE POSSIBILITY OF A WORLD FLOODED BY THE AWESOME SPURTYN DUYVEL. PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THE IMPRESSIVE WAY IN WHICH WRITER STEVE PERRY AND ARTIST TOM YEATES HAVE BROUGHT ARTISTIC LIFE TO THIS DEMON OF THE VOID, MANY READERS HAVE WRITTEN EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THIS IS TOO GREAT A CHALLENGE FOR OUR TIME-TRAVELING WIZARDS, THAT SUCH OVERWHELMING POWER ONCE UNLEASHED COULD AFFECT REALITY ON MANY DIFFERENT LEVELS.
NOW, FROM THE LAVISH EPIC OFFICES, HERE TO SPEAK TO THE UTTER RIDICULOUSNESS OF THESE CONCERNS IS EPIC COMICS EDITOR, ARCHIE GOODWIN ...
BLUB BLUB BLUB BLUB...!
INK

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CALL THEM INDIANS IF YOU MUST; IT'S NO LIE. CALL THEM SHAMEN, SORCERERS, SCIENTISTS, PRIESTS, PROFITEERS, WITCHDOCTORS, DEVILS, HEROES, ANGELS, NECROMANCERS, MECHANICS, TEACHERS... AND YOU'RE HALF RIGHT. CALL THEM MASTER AND STUDENT. THE ONE KNOWS MOSTLY EVERYTHING. THE OTHER BARELY UNDERSTANDS THE CHURNING, INEXPLICABLE ENERGIES COMING OF AGE WITHIN HIM. AS MEN OF KNOWLEDGE THEY HAUNT THE EONS OF TIME AND SPACE, SCOURING CREATION FOR WHAT THEY DO NOT KNOW. THEY SELL WHAT THEY DO KNOW. AND IT WAS BECAUSE OF THIS THAT THEY FOUND A TALKING FISH, THE NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE, MYSTIC MEGALITHS IN THE MESOZOIC, AND THE CELTIC AND PHOENICIAN CITY-STATES ALONG THE COAST OF WHAT 6000 YEARS LATER WOULD BE CALLED AMERICA. IT BEGAN WITH A SIMPLE LESSON IN MIXING CESSINA, THE TIME VAPORS, WHICH FLEW OUT OF CONTROL AND EVENTUALLY ENTANGLED THEM IN A TRIANGLE OF CONNIVANCE, OBSESSION, AND JEALOUS LOVE. ONE GOT BASHED ON THE HEAD. THE OTHER FELT THE TUG OF LUST. CALL THEM CUSICK THE TUSCARORA AND DOOT OF THE WAWENOC. CALL THEM...

...Timespirits!

IN THE LAND OF NEW IBERIA, WHOSE CAPITAL BORE THE SAME NAME, CUSICK AND DOOT EACH PURSUED THEIR OWN ACTIVITIES.

AFTER RESCUING PRINCESS PEY...
...FROM HORSA'S BAND OF MERCENARY VANIR...
...HIRED BY TUBAL CARRIN TO KIDNAP HER BECAUSE HIS OBSESSION WITH HER FINALLY DROVE HIM TO IT...
...DOOT LEARNED THAT KING OGAM, PEY'S FATHER AND TUBAL CARRIN'S MENTOR IN THE MYSTIC ARTS (OGAM BANISHED TUBAL FOR LECHERY), HAD ONCE BEEN A TIMESPIRIT HIMSELF.

KING OGAM, DYING, SPURNED BY HIS ONLY DAUGHTER, TRADED HER AWAY TO DOOT FOR DOOT'S HELP IN RETURNING THE MAGIC BLACKSACK TO WHERE OGAM FOUND IT. MEANWHILE, CUSICK DANCED THE SPELL OF DESPERATION AND IT DELIVERED HIM TO TUBAL CARRIN. TUBAL HAD LEARNED FROM THE VANIR MERCENARIES THAT PEY LOVED ANOTHER, AND HE WAS DESPERATE TO MAKE THE WORLD AS MISERABLE AS HE, OR DESTROY IT COMPLETELY. WHEN HE DISCOVERED CUSICK KNEW THE ANSWER BUT REFUSED TO GIVE IT TO HIM, TUBAL RESORTED TO BASHING CUSICK ON THE HEAD. HE STOLE THE TALKING FISH, SPOKE THE SPELL FOUND AT THE MEGALITHS, AND IT ALL COMBINED SOMEWHERE IN THE VOID, BECKONING... CALLING... SUMMONING...

The Spurtyn Duyvel

part two

"The Blacksack of King Ogam"

ONCE ON EARTH THE SPURTYN DUYVEL BEGAN...TO SPURT. WATER. WATER. EVERYWHERE.

INVULNERABLE. UNSTOPPABLE. A JUGGERNAUT OF H_2O

N...NO, IT CAN'T COME BACK...

...MUST GET THE... ARRGGHH...

SOME KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED...

...AND IT WAS TOO MUCH FOR THEM.

SOME DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED...

I HATE BEING HIT ON THE HEAD. WHEN A WIZARD MUST RESORT TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE HE BETTER FIND ANOTHER PROFESSION!

...AND IT WAS STILL TOO MUCH FOR THEM.

W...WHAT DID I DO?

DO? DO? WHY...YOU SUMMONED THE SPURTYN DUYVEL, YOU IDIOT! THAT ANYONE COULD BE SO STUPID, SO INEPT, SO SELFISH AS TO REALLY CALL THE SPURTYN DUYVEL...WELL, IT'S JUST BEYOND COMPREHENSION.

NOT THAT IT MATTERS TO ME... I CAN JUST LEAVE.

BUT THINK, TUBAL CARRIN, THINK OF ALL THE INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO'LL DIE BECAUSE YOU'RE SUCH A NASTY, SELFISH, GREEDY INDIVIDUAL!

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I... I DIDN'T MEAN IT. I'M SORRY! PLEASE... PLEASE SEND IT BACK!
CAN'T.
THEN...THEN WHAT CAN I DO?
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU CAN DO, TUBAL CARRIN, AND I WON'T EVEN CHARGE YOU FOR IT.
BE NICE.
TRY BEING... CONSIDERATE! HAVE COMPASSION AND UNDERSTANDING FOR PEOPLE! AND DON'T ACT SO LECHEROUS ALL THE TIME.
THAT'S THE PITH OF IT, TUBAL CARRIN.
WAIT...
...DON'T GO...
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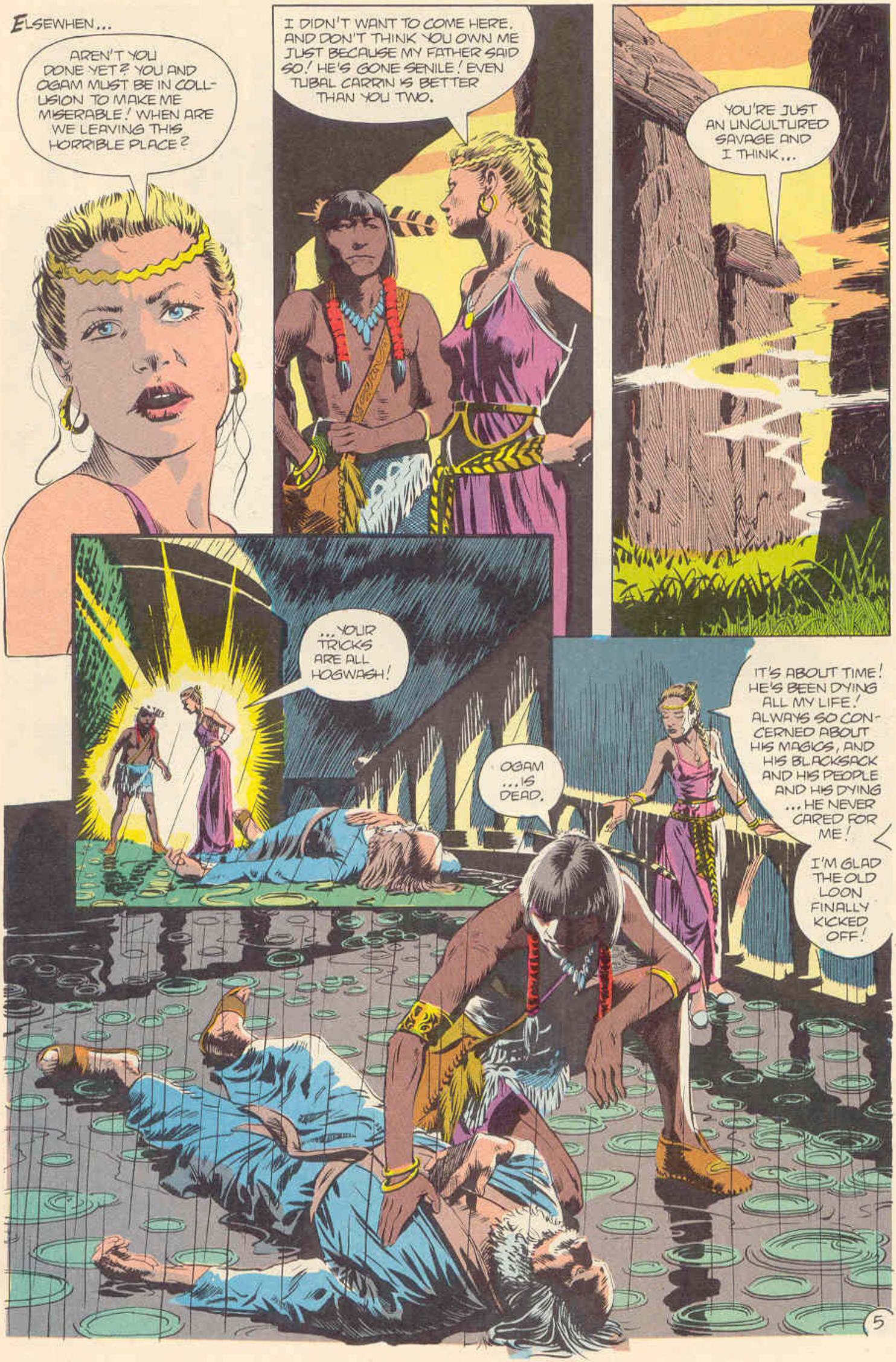
ELSEWHEN...
AREN'T YOU DONE YET? YOU AND OGAM MUST BE IN COLLUSION TO MAKE ME MISERABLE! WHEN ARE WE LEAVING THIS HORRIBLE PLACE?
I DIDN'T WANT TO COME HERE, AND DON'T THINK YOU OWN ME JUST BECAUSE MY FATHER SAID SO! HE'S GONE SENILE! EVEN TUBAL CARRIN IS BETTER THAN YOU TWO.
YOU'RE JUST AN UNCULTURED SAVAGE AND I THINK...
...YOUR TRICKS ARE ALL HOGWASH!
OGAM ...IS DEAD.
IT'S ABOUT TIME! HE'S BEEN DYING ALL MY LIFE! ALWAYS SO CONCERNED ABOUT HIS MAGICS, AND HIS BLACKSACK AND HIS PEOPLE AND HIS DYING ...HE NEVER CARED FOR ME!
I'M GLAD THE OLD LOON FINALLY KICKED OFF!

HE WAS YOUR FATHER!
HAVE RESPECT!
NO ONE EVER HITS ME!
NOT EVEN TUBAL CARRIN EVER...
...MY GODS...
...WHAT IS THAT?
DADDY OUTDID HIMSELF THIS TIME. PROBABLY WHAT KILLED HIM.
IT'S... FLOODING THE WORLD...
I HOPE IT KILLS YOU, TOO, DOOT. I HOPE IT KILLS EVERYONE!
I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING...
JUST LEAVE ME OUT OF IT!
I'VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE... IT BETTER WORK.
CUSICK ONLY GAVE ME A SMALL AMOUNT TO PRACTICE WITH...
STOP IT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME!
WHAT I SHOULD HAVE DONE LONG AGO...

WOT'S THIS?
IN THE PALACE COURTYARD OF OGAM'S CASTLE THE POPULATION OF NEW IBERIA IS PANICKED. WATER IS EVERYWHERE, RAINING DOWN, RUNNING IN THE STREETS, CREEPING HIGHER EVER HIGHER.
ANOTHER WIZARD! A PICT SHAMAN!
MAYBE HE CAN HELP!
HELP US! HELP US!
KING OGAM HAS SHUT HIM-SELF UP AND FORSAKEN US!
I'M JUST LOOKING FOR ME TRAVELIN' COMPANION...THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THE SPURTYN DUYVEL.
NOW LET'S NOT GET VICIOUS, HERE. BETTER TO PUT THAT ENERGY TO BUILDING BOATS, I'D SAY!
BUT I'LL TALK TO YOUR KING OGAM FOR YOU, ALTHOUGH NO SIMPLE MAGICIAN--NO MATTER HOW GREAT--COULD KNOW ABOUT THE SPURTYN DUYVEL!
MY PRICE FOR THIS DEED IS THAT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU SAY A PRAYER TO YOUR RESPECTIVE GODS AND BLESS CUSICK THE TUSCARORA. THAT'S ME!
AGREED?

DOOT'S BEEN HERE, THAT'S FOR SURE. I EXPECTED TO FIND HIM ALL CUDDLED UP IN THAT PRINCESS' ARMS... BUT IT SEEMS I END UP WITH A DEAD KING.
AND WOT'S THIS.
A MINIATURE OF THE MESOZOIC MEGALITHS! IT BEARS THE SAME CUNIFORM INSCRIPTION! NOW, I KNOW A COINCIDENCE WHEN IT BITES ME, AND THIS ISN'T ONE!
OGAM... HAVEN'T I HEARD THAT NAME BEFORE? SOMETIMES I THINK MY MEMORY'S AS SODDEN AS THE WORLD OUT THERE! PERHAPS HIS PEOPLE MIGHT BE RIGHT THINKING OGAM KNEW A THING OR TWO.
HE WAS OBVIOUSLY ADEPT.
MAYBE HE EVEN KNEW THE ANSWER TO THE SPURTYN DUYVEL--NOT THAT THE ANSWER ITSELF'S DIFFICULT ... IT'S GETTING YOUR HANDS ON THAT ANSWER WHAT'S THE IMPOSSIBLE PART.
STILL, HE MIGHT 'A KNOWN A SECRET KNOWLEDGE OR TWO, AND I DID PROMISE THOSE PEOPLE I'D TALK TO HIM.
AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DO THAT...
...RAISE OGAM FROM THE DEAD.
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TUBAL CARRIN LISTENS TO THE CRIES OF THE DROWNING AND WATCHES THE WATER RISE, LIFELESS, DESPONDENT, SLEEPLESS NOW LONGER THAN HE RECALLS.
HHHELP UUUSSS! SAAAVE USSSS!
HE DOESN'T CARE... ABOUT THE SCREAMING, THE FLOODING, THAT MONSTER OUT THERE, HIS LIFE... ANYTHING. HE'LL LET THE WATER CLOSE OVER HIS HEAD, RELEASING HIM. NOTHING MATTERS.
NOT EVEN VENGEANCE-DRUNK VANIR.
I MEAN TO EAT YOUR HEART, SLOWLY, AS YOU DIE. SUCH IS THE PUNISHMENT FOR WHAT YOU DID TO RUNESAYER.
OR PERHAPS WE'LL JUST CLEAVE YOUR SKULL, AND THEN TAKE THE GOLD YOU OWE US.
IF YOU BEG, PERHAPS RUNESAYER WILL CAST THE RUNES AND READ A QUICK DEATH FOR YOU.
BEG! BEG!
I DON'T CARE.
RAISE IT UP, RUNESAYER... I'LL HELP YOU...
...HIGHER...
TWICE THE AXE CLANGED TO THE FLOOR BEFORE HORSA GLIDED HIS ARM...
TUBAL CARRIN!
...NOW SPLIT HIS HEAD, MY MATE... KILL HIM!
PEY...?
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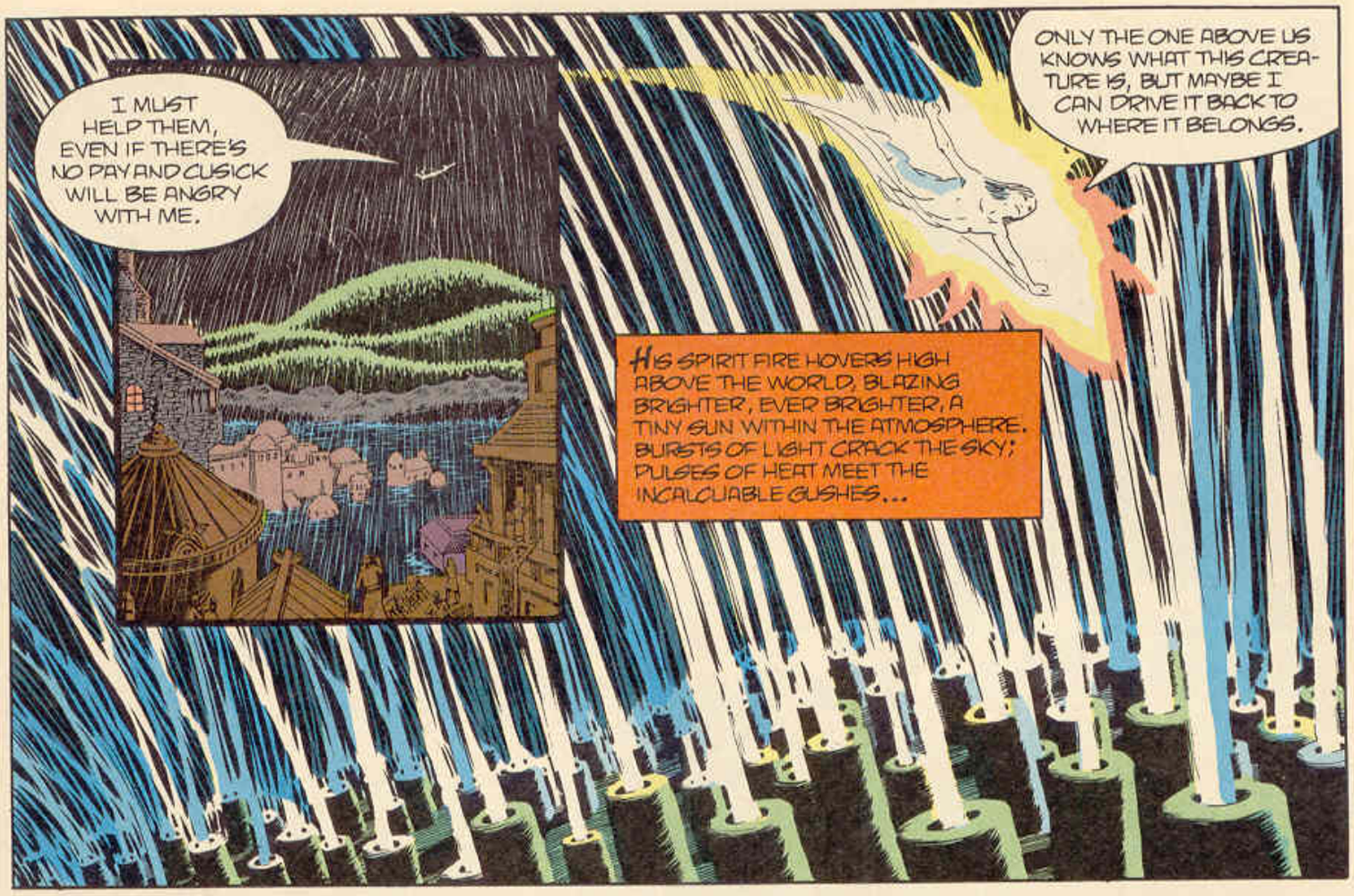
DON'T LET THEM STOP...
...MEEEEE...
WOOSH
ALL OF YOU ...GO!
CONSIDER VENGEANCE AGAIN AND I WILL NOT BE SO FORGIVING.
PRINCESS ...YOU'VE COME TO ME...
FORGET IT, TUBAL CARRIN. I HAD NO SAY IN THE MATTER. ARE YOU SO STUPID TO THINK I'D COME SEE YOU? HA! I BET YOU DID!
YOU CAUSED THIS MESS, DIDN'T YOU? I BET YOU DID! EVERYTHING YOU DO IS WRONG! YOU'RE A USELESS PILE OF WASTE, TUBAL CARRIN, AND THE SOONER YOU REALIZE IT THE BETTER OFF YOU'LL BE!
LOOK AT HOW I FIND YOU, SPINELESS AND IRRESPONSIBLE, LIKE THE WORM YOU ARE.
W...WHAT'S HE DOING?
JUST ANOTHER OF HIS DUMB TRICKS. HE'S DUMBER THAN YOU, BUT AT LEAST DOOT'S GOING TO TRY TO STOP THAT SPURTYN THING, WHICH IS MORE THAN I CAN SAY FOR YOU, YOU COWARD.


I MUST HELP THEM, EVEN IF THERE'S NO PAY AND CUSICK WILL BE ANGRY WITH ME.
ONLY THE ONE ABOVE US KNOWS WHAT THIS CREATURE IS, BUT MAYBE I CAN DRIVE IT BACK TO WHERE IT BELONGS.
HIS SPIRIT FIRE HOVERS HIGH ABOVE THE WORLD, BLAZING BRIGHTER, EVER BRIGHTER, A TINY SUN WITHIN THE ATMOSPHERE. BURSTS OF LIGHT CRACK THE SKY; PULSES OF HEAT MEET THE INCALCULABLE GUSHES...

...THAT CONDENSE AND RAIN BACK ON HIM, DIMING HIM, SOAKING HIM AS THE SPURTYN DUYVEL SPEWS MORE, YET MORE.

HE MANAGES TO PAINT THE SPELL OF STEEL...
...BEFORE STRIKING THE WATER LIKE A BOMB...
WHILE UNHURT, THE SHOCK DID JAR DOOT'S MEMORY--CUSICK HAD INDEED TAUGHT HIM THE SPELL OF GILLS.
AND ONCE HE COULD BREATHE HE KNEW THE SPURTYN DUYVEL WAS SIMPLY TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HE MUST FIND CUSICK...
ONLY CUSICK MIGHT KNOW WHAT TO DO.

SOMETIME LATER...
CUSICK! CUSICK!
CUSICK? I... I...
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING...
HE HUGS HIS KNEES AND ROCKS, CONFUSED, AFRAID, SUDDENLY VERY MUCH A SMALL BOY AWARE FOR THE FIRST TIME OF HIS MORTALITY, OF HELPLESSNESS, AND FAILURE.
...CUSICK ...I NEED YOU...

SOMETIME EARLIER, JUST AFTER DOOT'S SPIRIT FIRE WAS SNUFFED...
THERE! YOU SEE! THE IDIOT DIED FOR NOTHING. SEE THE MESS YOU'VE MADE, TUBAL CARRIN?
IT MAKES NO SENSE. WHY'D THE YOUNG PICT SHAMAN SACRIFICE HIMSELF? WHY'D HE BRING PEY TO ME?
AND WHY DOES SHE NOW SEEM...
LOOK AT THE WAY YOU LIVE! LIKE A PIG! AND ALL THESE THINGS THAT LOOK LIKE ME... IT'S CREEPY!
...WELL, NOT WHAT I EXPECTED.
AND WHAT ABOUT THE CRAZY OLD PICT WITH THE TERRIBLE KNOWLEDGES. SURELY THEY'RE INVOLVED WITH EACH OTHER. HE'LL WANT VENGEANCE.
BE NICE, HE SAID.
YOU'RE SUCH A CREEP, TUBAL CARRIN, AND I BET IT'S YOUR FAULT MY FATHER CROAKED.
OGAM'S DEAD?
THEN YOU HAVE NO ONE...
...EXCEPT ME!
LET GO...
YOU'RE SUCH A FOOL! MEN ARE ALL FOOLS! ME NEED YOU? HA! MAKE ME LAUGH!
I DON'T NEED ANYONE... NOT YOU, NOT DADDY, NOT DOOT...
...NO ONE!
SO YOU JUST KEEP YOUR DISTANCE AND DON'T GET ANY IDEAS.

TUBAL CARRIN SAT, UNMOVING, THROUGH THE NIGHT, OUTSIDE, SPANNING THE MOUNTAINS, THE SPURTYN DUYVEL BORED INTO HIS BRAIN, AN IMAGE HE COULDN'T LOOK AWAY FROM, A FATE HE COULDN'T AVOID.

HE'D NEVER FELT SUCH PAIN. HIS INSIDES WERE TEARING APART, AS IF SOMETHING SMALL AND BRIGHT AND SHARP WAS SLICING IT'S WAY OUT OF HIM.

I'M HUNGRY!

...BE NICE...

...SPINELESS TOAD! YOU'RE A FAKE! A COWARD!

... AND PROBABLY AN AWFUL LOVER!

HE CAN STAND NO MORE; TUBAL CARRIN EXPLODES!

ARE YOU SO CONCEITED AND SELFISH YOU CAN'T SEE THE WORLD'S ENDING?! AND I'M RESPONSIBLE! ME! AND YOU, TOO! YOU'RE JUST AS MUCH TO BLAME AS ME!

IF YOU HADN'T BEEN SUCH A TEASE... ALL THESE YEARS, TAUNTING ME, LURING ME, SPURNING ME, TURNING OGAM AGAINST ME! YOU TWISTED ME! DROVE ME TO THIS!

BUT NOW THAT I'VE GOT YOU...

...YOU'RE NOT WHAT I WANT.

HE GOES OFF IN HIS OWN WORLD...

ONLY YOU UNDERSTAND... I JUST WANTED LOVE... TO LOVE AND BE LOVED... BUT I MADE MISTAKES, BEEN WRONG...
IS THERE NO WAY TO PAY...TO MAKE AMENDS? WHAT MUST I DO?
PLEASE ...TELL ME...

MANY HOURS LATER...
YOU'VE FREED SOMETHING IN ME, SOMETHING BRIGHT AND SHARP AND BEAUTIFUL. IT'S WORTH LIVING FOR, FIGHTING FOR; I'LL DIE FOR YOU!
TUBAL, I WON'T LET YOU. NOT NOW. NOT EVER.
I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO.
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE.
HORSA AND THE RUNESAYER ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND. WHY DID YOU CALL US BACK?
WHAT DO YOU WANT, TUBAL CARRIN?
ALL THE GOLD IS YOURS... ALL YOUR SHIP CAN CARRY!
BUT ONLY IF YOU CARRY PRINCESS PEY TO SAFETY. RIDE OUT THE FLOOD WITH HER.
SAVE HER...
I WON'T GO!
JUST WHEN I FIND OUT HOW TO GIVE... TO LOVE... YOU WANT TO DUMP ME...
DAMN YOU, TUBAL CARRIN! YOU TRICKED ME!
I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS... AND IT'S TIME I ACCEPTED IT.
I LOVE HER SO.
FOR HER I SUMMONED THIS CREATURE, AND THAT WAS WRONG. FOR HER I'LL SEND IT BACK...

...OR DIE TRYING!
RUNESAYER...LOOK! THEY'VE GOT THE WIZARD'S SLUT! WE'LL AT LEAST HAVE SOME REVENGE!
YOU'LL HAVE YOUR FUN WITH HER...
SHE PATS HIS HAND AND THE RUNESAYER EMITS HORRIBLE LITTLE GASPING SOUNDS IN REPLY.
RETURN TO YOUR MAN... RUN!
LET HER GO! WE HAVE THE GOLD. IT'S ENOUGH.
MUTINEER!
DON'T EVEN THINK IT... OR YOU GET THE SAME.

TUBAL!!!
HE KNEW FROM THE START IT WAS USELESS, BUT HE COULDN'T STOP WHAT HIS JUST RAGE HAD SET TO MOTION...
...A SNOWBALLING OF SIZZLE AND CHURN THAT BACKED UP LIKE AN OVERLOAD.
UNTIL HE CAN STAND NO MORE; TUBAL CARRIN EXPLODES.
TUBAL...
...CARRIN...

AT OGAM'S CHAMBERS A FEW MINUTES BEFORE-- DAYS HAD PASSED FOR DOOT; CUSICK IN HIS TRANCE DAYS NOW--THE MINDRAVEN RETURNED HOME.
NO USE... CAN'T DO IT.
BUT SOMETIMES...
...YOU CAN'T GO HOME.
NOW I WON'T RECEIVE ALL THOSE PRAYERS. TOO BAD. PRAYER CREATES A VERY TANGIBLE ENERGY, DOOT, HARNESSABLE, MY BOY!
STILL, IF WE CONSIDER DEATH THE HAND OF NATURE IT'D BE NO WORSE THAN SLEEPIN' UNDER A MAPLE TREE...
GETTING A BIT CROWDED IN THERE, I'D SAY.
BESIDES YOUR BROTHER THREE BIRDS YOU'VE NOW GOT, OGAM'S MINDRAVEN, PLUS YOUR OWN! OGAM REFUSES TO RETURN FROM THE DEAD--HE WAS TOO READY FOR IT--AND HIS MINDRAVEN DIDN'T ROOST BEFORE HE DIED.

IT SEEMS OLD OGAM DID KNOW A THING OR TWO.
CUSICK, DID HE... CAUSE THAT ...THING?
THAT 'THING' IS NONE OTHER THAN THE SPURTYN DUYVEL ITSELF. YOU'LL SEE SUCH A SIGHT ONLY ONCE. I KNEW IT WAS NO MYTH WHEN I FOUND THE SPELL, BUT I NEVER IMAGINED ANYONE WOULD ACTUALLY SUMMON IT DOWN.
TUBAL CARRIN...
...I SEE HIM...AND PEY, TOO! HE...ATTACKS ...CLEAN OF HEART ...BRAVE...
RIGHT YOU ARE! HIT ME ON THE HEAD, HE DID. STOLE THE SPURTYN DUYVEL!
THE MINDRAVEN SHOWS YOU ...OPEN UP TO IT!
...HE SACRIFICES HIMSELF... FOR HER...
DOESN'T SOUND LIKE THE TUBAL CARRIN I KNOW. THE SPURTYN DUYVEL CAN'T BE KILLED, STOPPED OR HARMED... ONLY DRAINED AND ALLOWED TO LEAVE.
...AND PEY, SHE IS... CHANGED, TOO...
CUSICK! WHEN SHE AND I HID THE BLACKSACK FOR OGAM SHE ONLY CARED ABOUT HURTING AND USING PEOPLE...BUT NOW...
WHAT DID YOU SAY... JUST NOW?
I'VE GOT TO SAVE THEM...
DOOT! WAIT FOR ME!
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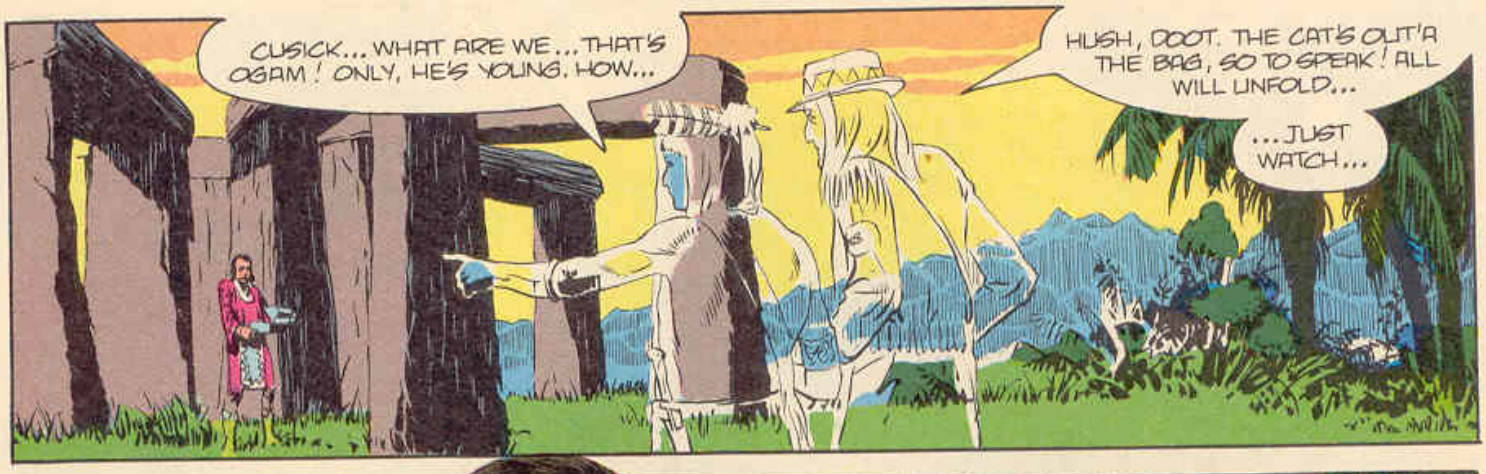
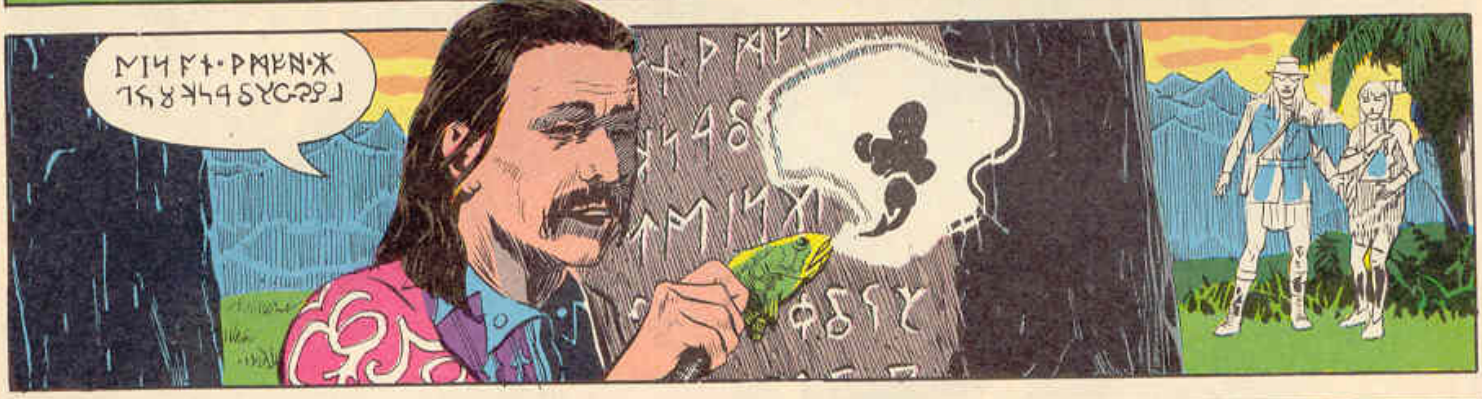
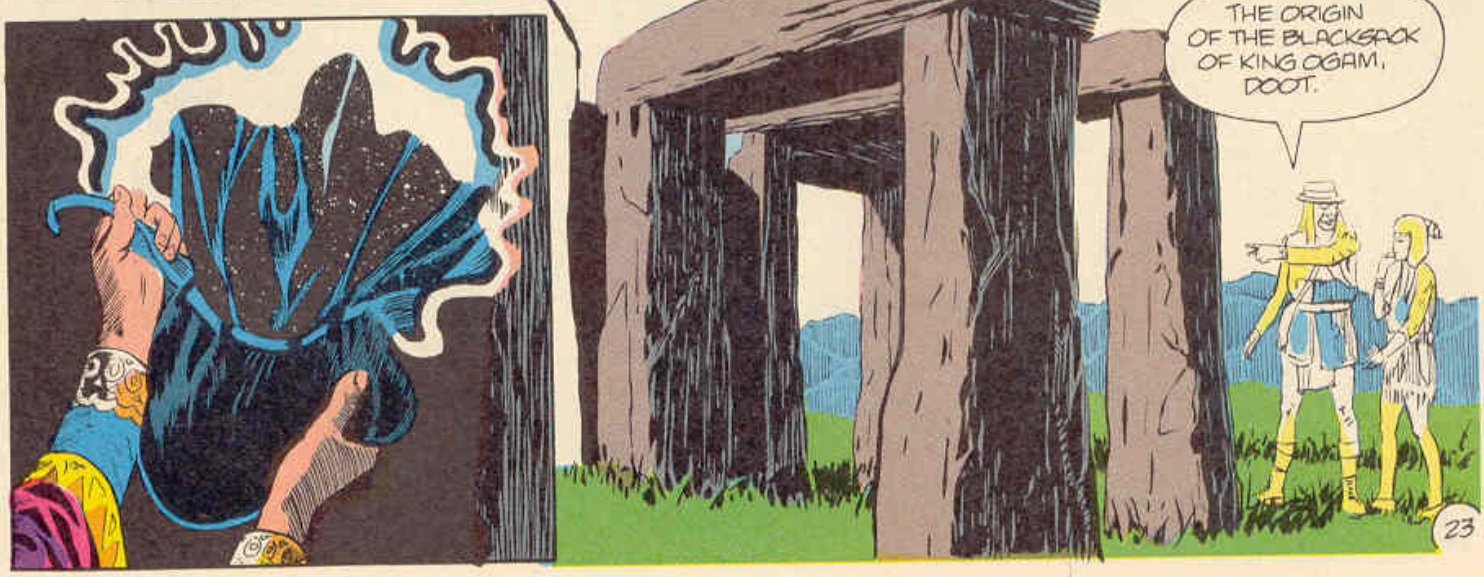
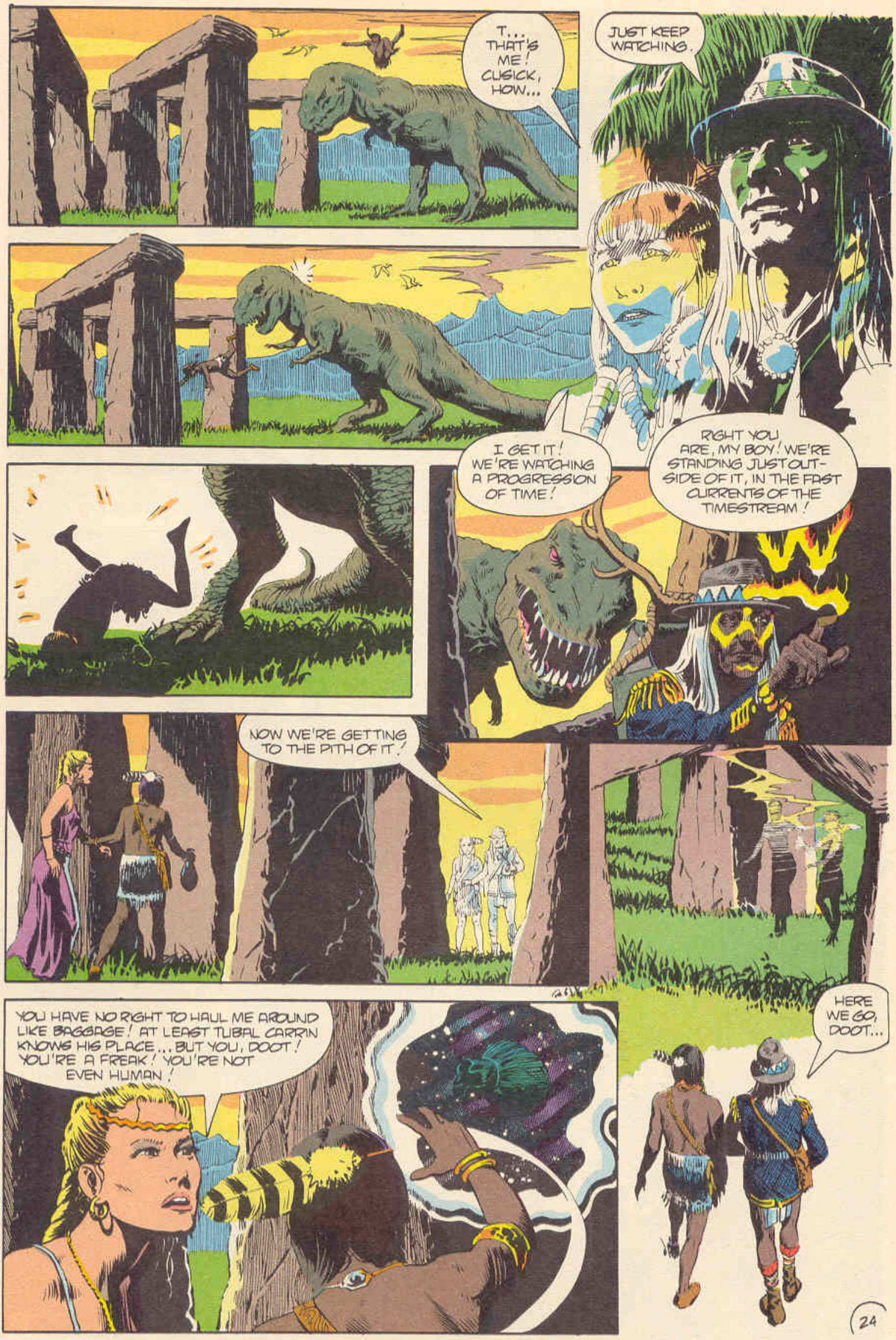
...TUBAL...DEAD... NOTHING LEFT... NOTHING WORTH LIVING FOR...
...I'M COMING, TUBAL CARRIN...
I'M AMAZED! TUBAL... PRINCESS... YOUR SPIRITS ARE SO CLEAN AND ALIVE-- COME TO LIFE BY LOVE! I'M CERTAINLY HAPPY TO BE WRONG ABOUT PEOPLE ONCE IN A WHILE!
I DO SO LOVE HAPPY ENDINGS!
THIS IS NO HAPPY ENDING. THE WORLD IS BEING FLOODED. ALL WILL DIE.
GLADLY... SO LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER.
COME ALONG, DOOT.
WE'RE JUST GOING TO LEAVE? LET THEM DROWN? CUSICK...
...ARE WE SO CRUEL?
ARE TIMESPIRITS SO HEARTLESS?


CUSICK... WHAT ARE WE... THAT'S OGAM! ONLY, HE'S YOUNG. HOW...
HUSH, DOOT. THE CAT'S OUT'A THE BAG, SO TO SPEAK! ALL WILL UNFOLD...
...JUST WATCH...



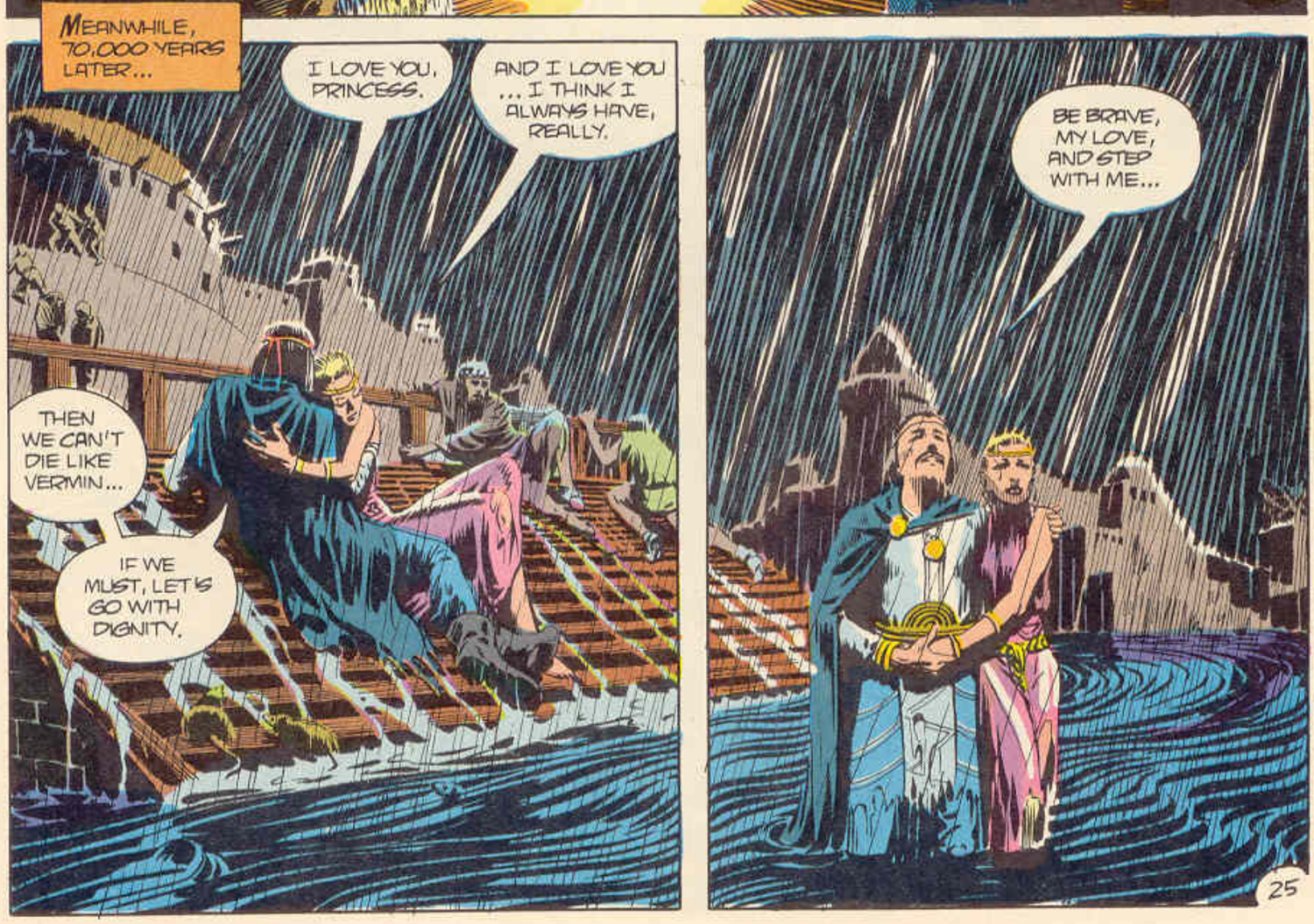

THE ORIGIN OF THE BLACKSACK OF KING OGAM, DOOT.

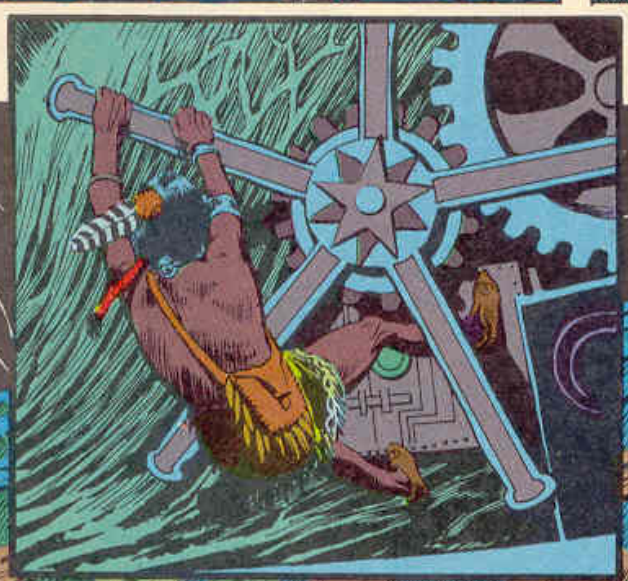

T... THAT'S ME! CUSICK, HOW...
JUST KEEP WATCHING.
I GET IT! WE'RE WATCHING A PROGRESSION OF TIME!
RIGHT YOU ARE, MY BOY! WE'RE STANDING JUST OUTSIDE OF IT, IN THE FAST CURRENTS OF THE TIMESTREAM!
NOW WE'RE GETTING TO THE PITH OF IT!
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO HAUL ME AROUND LIKE BAGGAGE! AT LEAST TUBAL CARRIN KNOWS HIS PLACE... BUT YOU, DOOT! YOU'RE A FREAK! YOU'RE NOT EVEN HUMAN!
HERE WE GO, DOOT...

WE'RE REAL AGAIN ...OR ARE WE?
CONFUSED TIME HAS STRAIGHTENED OUT, BUT IT'S ALL SIMPLY A PERCEPTION, MY BOY. PERCEPTIONS MAY BE CHANGED. NOW, HUSH...

THERE WE GO, DOOT! THE BLACKSACK OF KING OGAM!

THE ANSWER TO THE SPURTYN DUYVEL!


MEANWHILE, 70,000 YEARS LATER...
I LOVE YOU, PRINCESS.
AND I LOVE YOU ...I THINK I ALWAYS HAVE, REALLY.
THEN WE CAN'T DIE LIKE VERMIN...
IF WE MUST, LET'S GO WITH DIGNITY.
BE BRAVE, MY LOVE, AND STEP WITH ME...



HIGH ABOVE, THE SPEWING, SPURTING APPENDAGES SUDDENLY FOLD DOWN ON THEMSELVES, GOING DRY...

AS CUSICK THE TUSCARORA OPENS THE BLACKSACK HE IS ENGULFED BY A VORTEX OF SWIRLING WATER WHIRLPOOLING INTO IT!

THE PLUG PULLED ON THIS COSMIC DRAIN, CUSICK CAN ONLY HANG ON TO THE MAELSTROM OF ROLLING, SWIRLING, SURGING VERTIGO...
...UNTIL ALL THE WATER IS SUDDENLY GONE.
CUSICK! CUSICK! WE DID IT! WE...
MOVE, DOOT! IT'S NOT...
...OVER...

HOW LONG THE TIMESPIRITS REMAINED THERE CATCHING THE GEYSER FROM THE SPURTYN DUYVEL'S EYE NEITHER COULD SAY.

TWO DAYS? THREE? SEVEN? TIME IS A PERCEPTION.
THE SPURTYN DUYVEL'S REALLY A SIMPLE, HAPPY CREATURE...
...EVOLVED FROM THE MACHINES OF LONG DEAD PLANETMAKERS...
...AND IT CANNOT RETURN TO ITS HOME UNTIL ITS GRIEF AND SADNESS ARE DRAINED FROM IT, MAKING IT LIGHT ENOUGH TO OVERCOME ITS HOMESICKNESS.
AND EVEN THEN IT MUST BE TOLD IT CAN GO.

THANK YOU!
BLESS YOU!
DID THE PRINCESS LIVE?
YES.
I SHOULD HAVE HACKED OFF HORSA'S HEAD... PUT A KNIFE IN RUNESAYER'S RIBS... THEN VERTIGERN WOULD LIVE. BUT I WAS WEAK.
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM, CUSICK?
HE'S NOT SUCH A BAD MAN...
THEN VERTIGERN WAS NOBLE. HE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HER, WHILE I... I AM A COWARD.
WOULD THAT I HAD DIED, CRUSHED BENEATH THIS GOLD, LIKE THE OTHERS.
...LET'S FORGIVE HIM!
YOU'RE FORGIVEN, HENGIST.
SOMETHING BOTHERS ME, CUSICK.
WHAT'S THAT?
YOU'VE GOT THE BLACKSACK, RIGHT?
AND GLAD OF IT, TOO! NOW I DON'T HAVE TO CARRY THAT PACK ALL THE TIME. IT HURT MY BACK, ANYWAY.
YOU SEE, DOOT, THE BLACKSACK HOLDS INFINITY! IT BRIDGES TIMEZONES, CONNECTS REALITIES, SPANS DIMENSIONS! WHAT A PRIZE! I'VE WANTED ONE FOREVER!

HOW CAN WE THANK YOU?
WELL, YOU COULD...
CUSICK, ISN'T THE BLACKSACK PAYMENT ENOUGH?
RIGHT YOU ARE, MY BOY.
TUBAL AND I SHALL MARRY! WE PLAN TO RETURN TO NEW IBERIA, WHERE WE'LL RULE IN DADDY'S NAME.
WE HOPE TO BE AS KIND AND JUST AS OGAM WAS HIMSELF.
AND WE'LL HOLD THE LARGEST CEREMONY THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN TO MOURN HIS DEATH.
YOU'LL NEED A GOOD MAN TO COMMAND OGAM'S FORCES, TO MAINTAIN PEACE WITH THE OTHER CITY-STATES.
HENGIST, HERE, IS THAT MAN.
I'M STILL BOTHERED, CUSICK. I JUST DON'T UNDER-STAND.
WHERE DID ALL THE WATER GO?
GOOD QUESTION!
I'LL SHOW YOU.

WE SENT THE WATER WHERE IT WOULDN'T BE NOTICED.
PART OF IT CAME HERE, TO ATLANTIS DURING THE FINAL SECONDS...
...ANOTHER PORTION...
...CAME HERE, TO CENTRAL AMERICA, WHERE THE MAYAN DELUGE WAS RODE OUT BY COX COX HIMSELF, WHO SAVED HIS FAMILY AND RESIRED HIS RACE.
BUT MOST OF THE WATER ENDED UP...

...COMING DOWN ON THIS POOR FELLOW.
I BELIEVE HIS NAME IS...
...NOAH.
T. YEATES 10/1/84
THE END.